

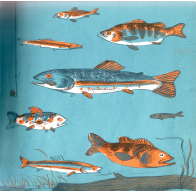
SAM'S FIRST FISH



Leonard
Shortall









SAM'S FIRST FISH

written and illustrated by

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Sam Clark lived in the country.
He lived on a farm with his mother
and his father and his older
brother Tom. His uncle lived on
another farm close by.



A river ran by the Clarks' farm. Sam and Tom could see it from their window. It ran under an old bridge below Sam's house and over some big rocks in front of his uncle's house. Finally it went around a bend, and then Sam lost sight of it.







Sam went to the river almost every day. Some days Tom came with him to fish, and Sam watched his brother. Sam wanted to fish too, but he didn't have a fish pole, so he *looked* for fish instead.



One day Tom tried out a new fish plug. "This new popper plug should catch a lot of bass, Sam," Tom said. "Now watch!" And Tom reeled in his fishline. *Pop, pop, pop!*

Sam saw the funny little popper plug hop across the water. "I'll bet I could catch a bass with that popper plug, Tom!" Sam exclaimed.





"You're not old enough to use a rod and reel, Sam," Tom answered. "Be quiet now. You'll scare the fish away!"

Soon Tom had caught three good-sized bass. Sam ~~knew~~ he could catch fish too, if only he had a rod and reel.

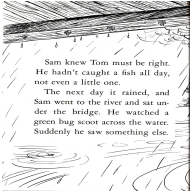
The next morning Sam found some string and tied it to a long stick. He tied an old fishhook to the string and put some bacon on the hook. Then he went down to the river to fish.

Sam fished all that morning. After lunch he fished all afternoon. At last he went home for supper.

"You won't catch anything with that thing, Sam," Tom said, when he saw Sam's fish pole. "Fish won't bite on bacon."



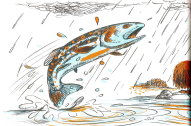




Sam knew Tom must be right. He hadn't caught a fish all day, not even a little one.

The next day it rained, and Sam went to the river and sat under the bridge. He watched a green bug scoot across the water. Suddenly he saw something else.





A big fish! It swam up under the green bug. Swoosh! The big fish came right out of the water. Then it fell back into the river. Splash!



Sam saw it flip its tail. Then it was gone. The green bug was gone too. Sam had never seen such a big fish.



Sam ran to the barn as fast as he could. "Tom! Dad! I saw a fish this big!" he cried.

"Oh, come *on* now, Sam!" Tom said.

Tom's father smiled. "Maybe Sam saw a whale," he said. And



Sam knew they didn't believe him.

Then Sam went to the house and told his mother about the fish. "My, my, Sam," she said. "That's quite a fish story." And Sam knew his mother didn't believe him either.

Sam decided his family would never believe he had seen the big fish unless he was able to catch it. Finally he went to Tom and asked him once more for his rod and reel. "I'm big enough, Tom," Sam told him. "I know how to use it."

"Oh, all right," Tom finally said. "But be careful with my popper plug."



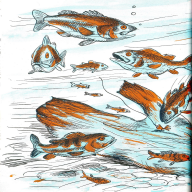
Sam took Tom's rod and reel
and ran to the river. Then he be-
gan to fish. And the popper went
pop, pop, pop, pop!





Suddenly something pulled on the fishline. The big fish, Sam thought. And he pulled as hard as he could. Snap! The fishline broke.

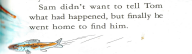
Sam fell over in the grass. Then he looked at the end of the line. The popper plug was gone!





Sam climbed up on the bridge and looked into the water. There was the popper plug. It was caught on a log, way too deep for anyone to reach.

Sam didn't want to tell Tom what had happened, but finally he went home to find him.





"Where's the big fish, Sam?
And where is my popper plug?"
Tom asked, when he saw Sam.

Sam told him he had lost the
plug.

Tom frowned and looked very
annoyed. "You will have to buy
me another popper, Sam," he said.
"And you can't use my rod and
reel again. I told you before, you
aren't big enough."





Sam was saving his money to buy a rod and reel, and he had a dollar in his bank. Now he had to buy another popper plug with it. He thought he would never get a rod and reel of his own.





The next day Sam went to his Uncle Jack's house. Uncle Jack was the best fisherman he knew. When Sam got there, he told his uncle all about the big fish.

"It sounds like a brook trout to me, Sam," Uncle Jack said.

And Sam knew Uncle Jack believed that he had seen the big fish.

"Could we catch the brook trout, Uncle Jack?" Sam asked hopefully.





"We might catch him with a trout fly, Sam," Uncle Jack said. "I think we should make a special one, don't you?"

Sam watched his uncle tie the



trout fly. He used little bits of red and yellow feathers, blue and brown feathers, and some silver tinsel too. He tied them all to a fishhook.

"This fly is called a Silver Doctor, Sam," Uncle Jack said. "If you meet me at the bridge tomorrow morning, we'll see what it can do!"





Early the next morning Sam ran down the road to the river. He waved good morning to Uncle Jack.

"Good morning, Sam," his uncle called. "You're right on time."





Sam watched Uncle Jack tie a trout fly to his fishline. It was the Silver Doctor.

"Do you think we'll catch the trout today?" Sam asked.

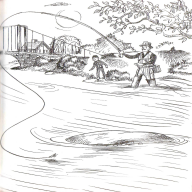
Uncle Jack smiled. "Well, we'll see. You better move downstream a little, Sam. I'll need some room," he said.





Uncle Jack waded into the river. He waved his long fish rod back and forth over his head. One, two, three times he waved it.

Sam saw the Silver Doctor sail through the air. It flew way out over the river. Then it fell into the water. Sam watched it float there. Would the big fish see it? Sam wondered.





Sam and Uncle Jack watched the trout fly. It went slowly down the river, and it began to sink.

Just then Sam saw something in the water! He saw it move un-



der the Silver Doctor. Swish! Out of the water it came high into the air. It was Sam's big fish!

"You've got him! You've got him, Uncle Jack!" Sam cried.



Splash! The big fish fell back into the water. Then Uncle Jack's foot slipped on a rock. There was another splash. Sam saw Uncle Jack sit down in the water and drop the fish rod. It came down the river toward Sam.



"Get the rod, Sam! Get the rod!" Uncle Jack shouted in great excitement.

Sam had to think fast. He ran into the water and reached for the fish rod. And he got it! He reached for it just in time!





Sam stood in the water and hung on to the fish rod. Zzzz! Sam heard the reel spin. The big trout cut through the water. It pulled hard on the fishline. The long pole bent in Sam's hands.

"Hang on, Sam!" Uncle Jack called. "I'm coming."



The big fish jumped again. Sam was afraid he couldn't hang on—but he did. Finally a big wet hand took hold of the pole.

"Good boy, Sam! I've got it now," Uncle Jack said. "You didn't let him get away!"



Then Sam watched Uncle Jack bring in the big fish. The fish jumped and splashed. At last Uncle Jack caught him in a net.

"You have him now, Uncle Jack!" Sam cried.

Uncle Jack laughed. "You have him now, Sam. He's *yow* fish. He didn't get away because of you! And he's the biggest brook trout I ever saw."





Uncle Jack told everyone what Sam had done. And everyone saw Sam's big fish. Now they all believed him. His mother and father, and even Tom, said that he should have his own rod and reel. And they all went out and bought one for Sam together.





SHOULDER

SAM'S FIRST FISH

WING

RAINBOW  FISH
Library Edition